

The federal government can and should do more to invest in our students and schools as states struggle to provide adequate K-12 funding, as well as affordable higher education opportunities. Quality education creates sound building blocks for future generations, yet recent trends indicate that American students are falling behind their foreign counterparts in nearly all subjects.

### **DeFazio's Community College Scholarships**

DeFazio understands the importance of higher education and he could not have attended college without the assistance of financial aid. This is why he established a scholarship fund for dislocated workers at five community colleges in southwest Oregon. Since he has consistently refused the pay raises that other Members of Congress keep passing for themselves, the scholarship fund lets him use that excess pay to benefit Oregonians. By the end of 2011, DeFazio will have contributed \$334,000 of after-tax salary toward 207 scholarships and debt reduction. He counts these scholarships among of his proudest accomplishments.

### **Early Childhood Development**

DeFazio has been a strong supporter of increasing federal funding levels and federal resources to Pre-K programs, such as Head Start. Early childhood education, nutrition, health care and family support services are critical for our nation's youth. Often times these programs are not just about schooling, they are about meeting the needs of young children and their families.

### **No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, or the Elementary and Secondary Education Act**

The NCLB needs to be redrafted, providing opportunities to track student progress in a meaningful way rather than continue the short-sighted policies that do not provide schools the necessary flexibility to reach achievement goals. DeFazio strongly believes that Congress needs to fully fund NCLB. When the federal government imposes mandates on local schools, then the federal government should follow through on promised funding to fulfill those mandates. In addition, the flawed testing mandate and 100% proficiency mandates are a flawed framework for measuring student achievement.

DeFazio has also championed federal funding for school construction and modernization. He protested the removal of these critical funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and supports the inclusion of these funds as part of job creation legislation.

### Higher Education

In addition to his scholarships, Congressman DeFazio has been a consistent supporter of federal higher education programs such as Pell grants, federal work study, and student loan forgiveness, which helps make college more affordable.

As a recipient of financial aid, DeFazio understands the importance of financial aid in helping students achieve a higher education for those who want one. He was proud to support the Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act (SAFRA) which became law in 2010. The SAFRA comes at an opportune time as a record number of students need assistance for affordable, quality education opportunities. SAFRA eliminates taxpayer financed subsidies to banks making federal educational loans in favor of a more cost efficient model, the Direct Loan program. Direct loans to students provide more opportunities to future generations than do subsidies to banks. Eliminating bank subsidies will result in \$61 billion in tax-payer savings over the next 10 years, which completely pays for the improved educational investments.

DeFazio was one of a few members of Congress to object to the \$21 billion in graduate student loan cuts in the Budget Control Act of 2011. In the next 10 years 2.5 million new jobs will require a graduate degree. At the same time the debt burden from higher education is sky rocketing. Master students face a cumulative debt load of \$51,950 at graduation on average, and doctoral students who have borrowed report an even steeper debt burden of \$77,580.

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### Must Reads

[Funding for graduate education slashed in new deal](#) - *Daily Emerald* 8-7-11

[Leaders debate end to college loan subsidies](#) - *Daily Emerald* 7-17-11

[Thanks to Peter DeFazio for deferring raises to scholarships](#) - *LTE Corvallis Gazette-Times* 10-29-10

[Congressman helped 33 go to college](#) - *Coos Bay World* 2-2-10

[Logger uses funds to pursue teaching dream](#) - *Coos Bay World* 2-2-10

[DeFazio aids scholarships](#) - *Coos Bay World* 1-20-10

[Open Letter on the Economic Stimulus Package](#) - *Peter DeFazio op-ed* 2-14-09

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## Floor Speeches

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## Press Releases

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8-2-11 [DeFazio statement on debt ceiling bill](#)

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3-22-11 [Oregon Delegation Urges Budget Committee To Include Vital Secure Rural Schools In FY2012 Budget](#)

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2-11-11 [DeFazio Condemns Republicans For Allowing Vital Worker Assistance to Lapse](#)

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□ 10-11-10 [DeFazio to Visit Benton and Linn Counties; will announce increased hospital payments for Good Sam, tour microproducts breakthrough institute, meet with ASOSU, and tour LBCC mechatronics facility](#)

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8-10-10 [DeFazio votes for kids; to close corporate tax loophole](#)

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7-14-10 [DeFazio leads bi-partisan letter to President Obama Requesting Secure Rural Schools in 2012 Budget](#)

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12-16-09 [DeFazio Secures Final Funding Approval for Vital Research Projects In Oregon](#)

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7-13-09 [DeFazio Secures Critical Funding to Expand LCC Nursing Program](#)